NAQCC News

Jun 11, 2011	NAQCC Web Site	Issue #144

In this issue:

1. June Sprint.
2. May Challenge Results
3. General Club News
3a. Chapter News
4. Elmer Project
4a. NAQCC QRS Nets
5. CW Cartoon of the Month
6. Member Spotlight
7. News Items and Articles by Our Members

1. JUNE SPRINT: The Dayton hamfest affected our May sprint and left us with barely enough logs - 104 - to continue our streak of 100+ logs to 14 months now. There should be no distraction this month and we hope for around 120 logs or more.

The sprint is this coming Tuesday evening at 8:30P EDT, 7:30P CDT, 6:30P MDT, 5:30P PDT which in all cases convert to Wednesday 0030Z and last for two hours.

Being low-key, slow paced sprints, ours are an excellent testing ground for newcomers. Even the many veteran contesters/sprinters who enter will slow down for you if needed. Don't be afraid to ask them.

Every month we get many folks who enter our sprints saying it's their first venture into any kind of ham radio contesting. Just read the soapbox entries for each sprint to see what I mean.

We have a prize of WB8LZG's paddle handles and knobs thanks to another generous donation of the handsome hand-crafted items by Gregg. They go to the winner of a random drawing among all who participate in and submit a log for our sprint each month. Previous winners are not eligible. Take a look at the Prize page in the main section of the web site to see what they look like if you don't already know. We deeply appreciate Gregg's generosity.

We had a question about the sprints posed at the recent Butler Hamfest (see the club news for more info on the hamfest). One member asked if we could adjust the frequencies for the sprints on 40 meters because of QRM with the increased participation. Perhaps we should have made it more clear that any frequency range for just about any contest is not carved in stone. You can always go higher than the upper edge of the range or lower than the lower edge if conditions make it necessary to spread out more.

Remember to be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

2. MAY CHALLENGE RESULTS: It seems despite the fact that our activity days program never receives any action that the WARC bands are still quite popular. With still a little time left to report results, we've received submissions from 13 different folks so far. Nine made at least the required 20 WARC bands QSO's to satisfy the challenge. Four more made less than 20 but will still receive recognition in the form of a participation point and web site listing. Of course you could make as many QSO's as you wished, but to avoid the appearance of a contest which are not allowed on the WARC bands, and to keep it to a common goal, we only listed 20 QSO's for those who did make more than 20. Of the listed QSO's, 108 were on 30, 86 on 17, and 17 on 12 meters. While it wasn't required to list the individual QSO's, comments indicate than many of the QSO's were DX, especially on 17 and 12 meters.

Full Challenge info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- I had an interesting email discussion with Dean NW2K about our awards program, especially the Friendship Club. He thinks as I do that there should be many more FC Award holders than the 8 we have. He thinks that perhaps the 'paperwork' or 'computerwork' is too much for some of our members. He offered some suggestions as to how to perhaps simplify it. I took one suggestion and worked on it, and I think it makes applying for our FC Award as simple as the proverbial 'falling off a log'.

I'll briefly describe it here and in a week or two we'll have a tutorial up on the web site describing it in detail. All you do is use GenLog. Set it up for a NAQCC sprint and use the filename 'friendship'. Then set your paper log next to your keyboard or put your computer log in a window along with GenLog. Enter the calls of stations you worked and hit the space bar. If the person is a member, GenLog will pop up his number, and you hit space bar until it is entered in the log, and go on to the next station. If it is not a member, hit escape N1fBf and move on to the next station. No need to worry about the date or time. Just be sure to always keep GenLog on the same band as you enter your stations. That way GenLog will warn you if you've entered that station before. Date, time, and band are not required in your application, or won't be after we change the log requirements if necessary. I'll have to check on that. Anyway we will set it up so all you need to do is submit the GenLog 'friendship' file as your application. Any questions, ask please. More details will be in the tutorial and if you have questions, we can adjust the tutorial accordingly. I've used GenLog for so long, it is second nature to me, and I may overlook some points that should be explained more thoroughly in the upcoming tutorial.

I think eventually we will adapt our awards program so that as many as possible can be applied for using GenLog in some manner. It works so well for our sprints, I see no reason it shouldn't work equally well with our awards with some tweaking here and there.

Just as a test, I entered about 600 QSO's from my 2011 computer log in about 45 minutes and GenLog spit out 170 qualifying QSO's.

One thing that will need tweaking is our QSO points value for the FC Award. That needs some thinking yet. It's not straightforward to change the point value in GenLog as stations are entered, although it can be done with a couple extra mouse clicks or edited after the log is

completed. Or of course as mentioned in the award as an alternative, if the QSO points feature is too complicated for you, you can just work 200 different members at 1 point each to earn the award. Then you don't have to worry about QSO points.

- One rewarding thing about the Butler hamfest (or any hamfest) is having more and more NAQCC members present and visiting with us at our table or booth. This year, I count 23 calls on our sign-in sheet, of which 16 are current members. We also had one of our 9 new members sign the sheet. Here is a list of those on the sign-in sheet with NAQCC number (if any) and state (no state listed means PA)

W3IU 1013, KB3JC 2979, NX3X 1009, WB3MKN 4284 MD, W3DMB 1007, WW3O, WB3BIQ 2939, K3RKC 1895, WA3EYL (who signed up as a new member - see more info on him in K3WWP's member news item below), KG3W 3758, W3SYY 4295, KA3VXR, N3FCS 1424, KD0AR 1000 OH, AA3LX 4628, K8KE 4266 OH, KB3FPN, W3GWC 4627, N3LFB, KE3OG, K3HPS 1417, KB3SVJ, AA3CE 1420.

Those who became new members are: NA3WP, N3KDN, K3HFB, N3UIW, N3PQK, WA3EYL, W8CZN OH, N3PYJ, K8EIJ OH.

Manning our table were John K3WWP, Tom WY3H, Mike KC2EGL, and also helping out was John KB3SVJ. More after these pictures.

In the first picture, Tom (L) is busy studying some paper and Mike is trying to make a QSO. In the bottom picture John (L) and Mike are showing off their NAQCC hats, I guess, and looking at KB3SVJ who took the picture.

We did set up Mike's KX-1 and the portable inverted V antenna we used for our Kittanning Community Park outings. This year we were able to put the antenna out in the clear away from the building thanks to 100 feet of coax and a hole near the foundation of the building through

which the coax was fed.

We had success this year. Many stations were heard on 40, 30, and 20 meters. At least I think Mike operated on 40. I see in our log he worked N1QY in MA on 30, K1DCT in CT on 30, and N1EPL in NJ on 20. I worked K1USN in ?? on 20, KP4ARR in PR on 20, and FM5LD in Martinique on 20. It was great to work some DX. The KX-1 drew a lot of comments from a good many visitors. We used the club call of N3AQC. Mike also worked N1EPL again using his own call KC2EGL.

All in all, a great time was had by everyone. I don't think we got any of the usual anti-CW or anti-QRP comments we tend to get from a few poor souls at these gatherings. Personally I hope we can go to a couple more local hamfests this summer. That's a hint to Tom and Mike. HI. Since I don't drive, I can't go myself.

- Here's a list of those who've signed up to help us out with our October anniversary celebration by using one of our 10 N#A special event calls the week of Monday October 10 through Sunday October 16. If you don't see your call there, why not? All those who've operated our SE calls through the years have enjoyed it tremendously as well as helping to publicize the club. You don't need to make a firm commitment right now, but let us know if you're interested. You can always back out later if you should unfortunately become ill or have other more pressing things come up for that week. As you see from the list, we have no one expressing interest yet from a couple call areas. We want to have all 10 call areas be very active, so if you're in one of those call areas with no one listed or an area with just one person listed, come on and sign up. No matter how many we have from a call area, there is always room for one more, also.

N1A - N1DN
N2A - WB2VEN NW2K
N3A - K3WWP WY3H KC2EGL N3ES AF3Z
N4A - K2UFT KI4EBD
N5A - W5YDM K5JYD
N6A
N7A
N8A - N8XMS N8IUP
N9A
N0A - KC0PMH N0TU

Perhaps you did offer to help and are not listed. If so, then your offer was derailed somewhere along the email tracks. Please tell us again.

The guidelines are very simple. All you do is operate normally, but use the special event call instead of your own. Period. Put in whatever amount of time you can from 1 hour up to the full 168 hours, although I wouldn't advise that. HI The human body does need its rest. Each of the ten call areas from W1 through W0 has its own special event call as noted above. The operators in a call area co-ordinate their on-air times among themselves.

Sound interesting? Contact us via email at **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** and let us know.

Remember conditions should be the best they have been for any of our previous anniversary celebrations with the Sun finally coming alive this year. It should be a real bang-up celebration. Don't you want to be a part of it? If so, let us know as soon as possible.

- Just a quick reminder we're continuing with the hidden call sign idea originally suggested

by Bill KB3XS. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member in a place that is definitely out of context and containing a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (Jun 25) and win a gift certificate for 100 NAQCC QSL cards produced by the CheapQSLs.com company run by Hal K6RF (#0171) and donated by the NAQCC thanks to your generous monetary donations to the club.

3a. CHAPTER NEWS:

Here is where our club chapters present news about their chapter activities. We currently have three chapters - European, Minnesota, and Texas. We're looking forward to expanding that roster. Chapters are more or less independent local gatherings organized by members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines under the auspices of the NAQCC. If you would be interested in starting a chapter in your area, let us know and we'll send a copy of the guidelines.

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER:

pix_sm_mw3ym (13K)

Items in this section are from EU Chapter President Matt MW3YMY unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **MATT@MATTIRELAND.CO.UK**
The EU Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcc-eu.org/

NAQCC MINNESOTA CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from Chapter President Rich WD0K (L) and/or Keith K0HJC (R) unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to pix_email_wd0k .
The Minnesota Chapter web site is at http://www.naqccmn.com/

NAQCC TEXAS CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from TX Chapter Director Ron K5DUZ unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **WEBMASTER7388@NAQCCTX.COM**
The TX Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcctx.com/

The East Texas QRS Net (ETN) is meeting each Monday evening at 1900 CDST (2400 UTC) on 3564.5 KHz with a switch to 7121 KHz at 1930. The QRN on 80m is becoming a problem what with local T-storm activity becoming common. It was S9 for KA5TJS last Monday. No

check-ins on 80m so Allen switched to 7121 KHz and had one check-in.

Watch for the next NAQCC Net e-mail for the latest information. The ETN net will QSY up a bit for QRM so be sure to tune around.

The ETN is open to all hams regardless of QTH, so check in for a little CW practice or to show your support for the net. The Net Control Station (NCS) is Allen, KA5TJS. He will reply to you at the speed you call him, so don't be put off by stations sending faster than you can comfortably receive. You will be among friends, so give it a try!

Until next time, start planning your QRP CW portable operation during the ARRL Field Day event! You can find the NAQCC Texas Chapter website at http://www.naqcctx.com/.

4. NAQCC CW ASSISTANCE PROJECT:

Items in this section are from CW Assistance Project Coordinator Ron K5DUZ (L) unless otherwise credited.
If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**

I received one request for assistance from a CW student who has worked his way up to ten wpm. I of course recommended that he try the Koch method at fifteen wpm. I'm anxious to hear about his reaction to the jump to fifteen wpm. Regardless of your current receiving speed, a jump of five wpm seems like a huge jump at first, but your brain will acclimate to the faster speed amazingly fast. You just have to be patient and stick with it.

As always, I'm here if you need any help improving your CW skills.

Don't forget, if you would like to volunteer to be a Practice Buddy or would like to work on-the-air with one, please let me know your preferences and I'll work to set something up for you.

Now back to our discussion of learning and becoming proficient with Morse/CW.

I'm probably overdue in mentioning a little "fine print" here. Most of what I've had to say about learning Morse/CW since beginning this column is based upon my reading various long forgotten sources over the past fifty plus years and my personal observations and experiences. I can't begin to remember where I've read about the methods, techniques and tips that are now so ingrained in my memory. I'm sure that I've contributed nothing new to the method of learning CW that I've presented, but hopefully I've convinced you from my personal experiences that the Koch method is by far the best method to use and will save you much time and frustration over the commonly used "slow code" method. Additionally, I hope that some of the tips and tricks that I've mentioned will make your learning experience easier and more fun.

Since I began writing this column, I've intentionally not searched the Internet for sources of information about learning Morse/CW as I wanted to present my perspective on the subject without danger of plagiarizing the work of others, at least in recent times. I recently unearthed a 1963 edition of the ARRL "Learning the Radiotelegraph Code" pamphlet from a box of old books. It made me recall an earlier version I once owned (probably a 1958 edition), which was

my first formal introduction to the subject of learning "the code". A quick read of this pamphlet revealed that it is quite relevant today and was undoubtedly the cornerstone of my Morse/CW knowledge. My thanks to the ARRL for teaching me many of the fundamentals of copying CW so many years ago!

In my next column I will point out some of the available Internet resources relating to the subject of Morse/CW. You can begin with this one: "The Art and Skill of Radio-Telegraphy" by William G. Pierpont, N0HFF.

Until next time, HPE CU SN ON CW! Ron, K5DUZ

4a. NAQCC QRS NETS:

News and net reports in this section are from QRS Net Manager Dan AF4LB unless otherwise credited.
Dan will handle all Net related material at this email address:
pix email af4lb

Now our NAQCC QRS Nets schedule and activity report:

NAQCC QRS Net

Sunday evenings local time which is Monday 0000Z on 7041 kHz.

Date(UTC)	NCS		Participants				
5/27/2011	AF4LB	-4-	AF4LB	W4ISI	N9RLO	W3FDK	
6/6/2011	W4ISI	-5-	W4ISI	WB4UHC	WB3T	N2EI	N4EI

NAQCC ET QRS Net (East Texas)

Monday evenings local time, which is Tuesday 0000Z on 3564.5 kHz. Second call at 0030Z on 7122.0 kHz. If you can not hear us on 80 meters please give 40 a try.

Date(UTC)	NCS		Participants	
6/8/2011	KA5TJS	-2-	KA5TJS	KE5YUM

NAQCC EC QRS Net (East Coast)

Thursday evenings local time which is Friday 0130Z on 3565 kHz.

Date(UTC)	NCS		Participants		
6/3/2011	AF4LB	-3-	AF4LB	N4JD	K7HAP
3/10-2011	AF4LB	-3-	AF4LB	W4ISI	N4JD

NAQCC PNW QRS Net (Pacific NorthWest)

Thursday evenings local time which is Friday 0200Z on 3574 kHz.

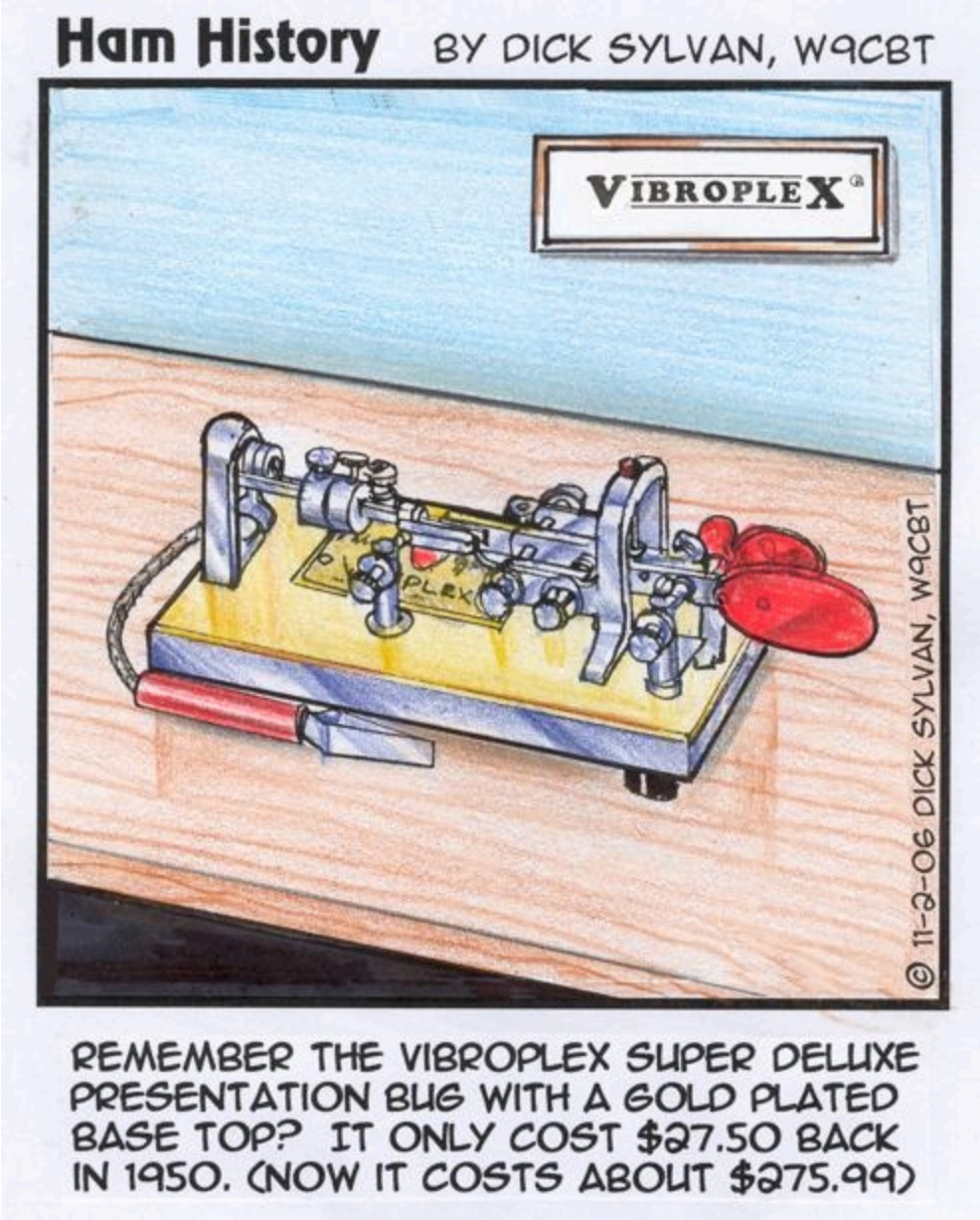
Date(UTC)	NCS		Participants		
6/3/2011	KE7LKW	-3-	KE7LKW	K7ZNP	N6KIX

All frequencies are +/- QRM.

For more net info, see CW Assistance/QRS Nets on the web site.

5. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH:

Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT NAQCC #2062. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in the K9YA Telegraph, a free ham radio eZine, where he is staff cartoonist. The NAQCC is very honored to reprint Dick's cartoons originally published in the K9YA Telegraph. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon has appeared in each of our even-numbered newsletters ever since their debut in Issue #058, November 17, 2007.


Ham History
BY DICK SYLVAN, W9CBT
VIBROPLEX
© 11-2-06 DICK SYLVAN, W9CBT
REMEMBER THE VIBROPLEX SUPER DELUXE PRESENTATION BUG WITH A GOLD PLATED BASE TOP? IT ONLY COST $27.50 BACK IN 1950. (NOW IT COSTS ABOUT $275.99)

6. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to

PAUL142857@GMAIL.COM. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

Gene Gur K3WNQ #2640

I became interested in Amateur Radio while in the Navy in the early 1950's but did not obtain a license until January 1963 when I became KN3WNQ, My Elmer was W3ZJZ (sk). I moved to Florida in 1967 and became W4TFM. I didnt like Florida and moved to Virginia in 1971 and went the vanity route to get my original call back. I retired from catv work in 1999 after 32 years. I now hold an Extra class license and I am a volunteer examiner.

My equipment consists of an Icom IC-718, a mint condition Kenwood TS-530SP, an MFJ-9406 6m SSB when the band is open, and a YAESU FT-2800 for 2m FM. Antenna is an S-9 vertical that I can tune 40m thru 10m with an MFJ-949E tuner. Trying differant antennas is my favorite activity I guess. My next project is a 40m NVIS dipole to set up. I operate mainly CW, and PSK-31 with a computer my son built for me. Equipment is activated by an old J-38 key, age unknown.

My wife passed away in 2009 but I have 4 daughters and a son and 7 grandchildren. I am still a member of the Pittsburgh Breezeshooters and enjoy golf and fishing. QRP at the present is done by cranking my IC-718 down to about 5 watts since the borowed rig I was using went to Florida with its owner. Any QRP contact I make I consider memorable.

CW forever.
Gene Gur K3WNQ

7. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS:

This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is April 28. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window. DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the member submitting them, and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** As I mentioned in a club news item above, one of the new members we signed up at the Butler hamfest was special to me. Kip WA3EYL was a regular check-in to our CW County Hunters net back in the 1960's. He was a teenager back then and was one of two regular check-ins from nearby New Kensington. I hadn't heard from him in any way since the late 60's or maybe early 70's. As soon as he walked up to the table and said we had worked regularly a long time ago and gave his call, I knew exactly who it was. It's funny how you can remember calls over the years. Of course with the vanity calls nowadays, that has changed as some folks seem to change calls as often as they change their socks. Kip and I never went the vanity route so even after 40+ years we recognized each other from our calls. I asked about the other WA3 station from New Kensington (Ted WA3ERF), and Kip said he hadn't been in contact with him either and thought maybe he was no longer in ham radio.

Anyway talking with Kip sure brought back a lot of memories from the CHN days. In case you don't know, it was WA8EOH and I who started the CW version of the CHN back in May of 1966 that has now evolved into the current CHN that is so popular with a dedicated group of hams. I'm not going to say more about the net here since there is a detailed discussion of how we founded it on my web site. There is also a discussion of how we started the CW County Hunters Contest a little while after starting the net. I may be prejudiced a bit, but I think it makes fascinating reading for anyone who is into county hunting. Just go to my web site via the link at the end of this item and to the County Hunting section.

Club president and friend Tom WY3H and I were talking about DX last night, and I mentioned I had made 432 DX QSO's so far this year which is the most since 2005 and not even half a year is gone. If I maintain that pace, I should be near or over 1,000 for the year which would be the most since the halcyon days of the last sunspot maximum around 1998-2002 when I made 1389 to 2271 DX QSO's each of those years. Tom asked me how many countries I'd worked this year, and I said I didn't know offhand, but with my Microsoft Access computer log, it took just a minute to find out the total is 89 so far. It looks like I may make a 2011 DXCC. The point of mentioning this is to remind you that NOW is the time to be chasing DX if you are into that fascinating aspect of our hobby. It looks like the current sunspot cycle maximum is going to be one of the lesser ones of recent years so take advantage of it while it lasts. Currently I've worked some DX on each of the past 76 days now, much of it with just 930 mW. And that is without 10 and 12 being all that good yet. When they kick in, it will be even easier to work DX.

If you're interested and want more info on county hunting, DX and other QRP/CW matters, check my web site here.

- **From Gary N4OLN #1184 -** Found this and thought to share it with you all.
JAPAN, JA. In celebration of the 220th birthday anniversary of Samuel F.B. Morse, special event stations using 8J1MORSE are active from each call area until December 31, 2011. Each callsign is followed by the call area number. Activity is on the HF bands using mainly CW with some SSB. QSL via bureau.

- **From Paul N8XMS #675 -** I recently found a logging program that I thought other members might be interested in. For many years I have been using a "big name" commercial program, but it was getting rather outdated. The newer DXCC entities were not in its database and it wasn't even designed to take advantage of the high-speed internet connection that I now have. So I started to look around for alternatives. An upgrade to the company's latest version of my old software would have cost $69 - that's about the price of some basic rig kits!

So I kept looking and found a freeware software package called Logger32 by K4CY. Logger32 is a professional quality program with tons of features. Its average review rating on eham.net is 4.7/5. It will do things like automatically download callsign information from QRZ.com and insert it into your log, upload QSOs to LOTW and EQSL, display a gray-line world map, do award tracking, etc. There are also a lot of extra features that I don't use like rig and rotor interface and control, DX spotting, automatic propagation data downloads, and a keyboard CW generator. I think that it will even do the digital modes.

There is a big learning curve and I am still climbing the hill, but I am already more than happy with it. Logger32 is not a contest logger like Genlog. I still use Genlog for my NAQCC sprints. Then I can easily import the sprint QSOs from Genlog into Logger32. It will even add operator name and QTH information as it imports the sprint file! The software is frequently updated with suggestions from users and there is a users group on Yahoo where you can get help with "how to" kinds of questions. If you are looking for a logging program, google (or Bing - K3WWP) Logger32 and check it out. I should offer the standard disclaimer of being nothing more than a very satisfied user of this free software.

Club email address - **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.